



The Institute of Medicine's New President

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In our society, and in our time, access to quality health care has come to be accepted as one of the inalienable human rights. But the guarantee of this new right is not a reality. It is an ideal to be approached. . . .

. . . Our commitment is to help lend the scientific method to the direction of a whole social movement. There have been many encouraging signs of acceptance of the Institute of Medicine as uniquely qualified to perform this public service. . . . And the acceptance, the success, and the meaning of this organization rests upon its having the essence, not merely the appearance, of nonpartisan objectivity.

. . . I believe that the criticality and skepticism and orthodoxy of method that one encounters in the biological sciences is transferable to problems more social or economic in content . . . and that objectivity is an equal requirement for all.

I also believe that the acquisition of new knowledge is a fundamental determinant of health and health care . . . and that scientific discovery and its technological extension are coordinate with, and inseparable from, quality, manpower, medical ethics and law, and other principal themes we have begun to develop.

Excerpts from inaugural address
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